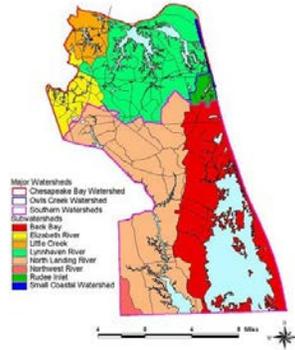




Situation Analysis Report



City of Virginia Beach

2013

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Introduction

In January 2011, the Mayor appointed a 13 member citizen group to study and analyze current trends to determine a vision for the future of Virginia Beach in 2040. The first phase of this group's work was to understand the forces affecting the community and its future. The group received presentations regarding community trends by experts and leaders on finance, planning, cultural resources, economic development, education, libraries, housing, military presence, parks and recreation, travel and tourism, transportation and demographics. The group also studied demographics, environmental trends, and other elements that influence the ability of City to achieve success, and assess their impact on our community and the organization. The Teams then develop desired outcomes, strategies and initiatives for the business areas and accomplish this through using the Gap Model in a report entitled *Envision Virginia Beach 2040*. In preparation for 2040, four sociological factors will likely influence the nature of the City's composition.

The City Council and the appointed citizen group have provided direction in defining the desired future for the City – a *Vision of A Community for a Lifetime* – a great place to live, learn, work and play. The Council supports that seven business areas that are critical to achieving this vision. Cultural & Recreational Opportunities; Economic Vitality; Family & Youth Opportunities; Quality Education & Lifelong Learning; Quality Organization; Quality Physical Environment; and Safe Community. In response to City Council's direction, Strategic Issue Teams were formed. Each team was charged with understanding the issues impacting the business area and developing a strategic plan.

The City of Virginia Beach unit of Virginia Cooperative Extension along with ELC members reviewed the reports produced by the Council and citizen's group and conducted an independent community survey. The purpose of the analysis was to identify key issues facing the community in which Virginia Cooperative Extension could assist to address and to determine how VCE could fit into the larger picture of the City's initiatives to moving towards 2040. The data also provide Extension staff up-to date information for developing educational programs for the community.

Unit Profile

Recognized globally as one of the best places to live, work and do business, Virginia Beach is a dynamic community strengthened by a diverse mix of industry, attractions and people. With 38 miles of beaches and 79 miles of scenic waterways, this vibrant East Coast city is situated along the shores of the Atlantic Ocean and Chesapeake Bay. Virginia Beach is home to more than 436,979 people, laying claim to being the largest city in the Commonwealth of Virginia and the 39th largest city in the United States.

The ethnic demographics in Virginia Beach are represented by the following: 68.99% White, 19.34% African American, 5.4% Asian, 5.9% Hispanic, .26% American Indian, .11% Pacific Islander A little more than 12% of the population speaks a language other than English at home. Students in the public schools speak approximately 50 different languages.

Census data indicate that 34% of the population is younger than 24 year of age; the largest representation of the population is between the ages of 25 and 54 which is 46% of the population with the median age at 35 years. Data also revealed that residents over the age of 55 represented 20% of the population. The female population is slightly larger than the male with 51% of the population being female and 49% male.

There are some 164,666 households in the City of Virginia Beach. The median income of these household has shown an increase past few years. The latest income statistics indicate the median household income increased from \$59,298 in 2009 to \$64,614 in 2011. Census data show an increase in the number of households above \$100,000. In 2009, the number of households above \$100,000 was 23.28% compared to 27.37% in 2011. Also the number of households with less than \$25,000 decreased during the same period from 13.01% to 12.06% of households.

The city is divided into two areas. The northern half is mainly urban and business. The southern half of the city is rural and agricultural. Although Virginia Beach contains a number of businesses, the city is also a bedroom community for thousands of citizens working in neighboring cities and on many area military bases.

With its strategic location in the heart of the mid-Atlantic, Virginia Beach is well-positioned for manufacturers looking to import, export or ship their goods both domestically and internationally. No longer simply assembly lines in large warehouses, factories today use robotics and machinery that require both expertise and precision to achieve optimum results.

More than 20% of the region's manufacturers are located in the City of Virginia Beach, producing items ranging from medical equipment to electrical wire and power tools. The business community in Virginia Beach is composed of a highly diverse collection of industries, including nationally and internationally known corporate headquarters, high-powered and technologically advanced manufacturers, billion-dollar defense contractors and locally owned shops.

Agriculture is vital to the City's existence. Even though agriculture acreage has dropped, the value of agriculture products produced in Virginia Beach has continued to rise since 2004 and has a sizable economic impact on the City. Agriculture is the third largest industry, falling behind tourism and the military respectively. Virginia Beach was once the largest hog producer in the state with the largest single hog farm east of the Mississippi River. Today, there are no dairy farms and only two large swine operations remain in the city. The estimated economic impact of Agriculture was \$122 million in 2010 and the five year average was \$114.2 million. Agriculture in Virginia Beach is a very diverse business consisting of various size farm operations, such as: soybean, corn and wheat farms, livestock farms, fruit & vegetable farms, farm stands, and equestrian operations. Field crops (corn, wheat, soybeans), fruit and vegetables, are the primary crops produced on approximately 26,000 acres each year. Based on the 2007 Census of Agriculture and other long-term data, the 174 farms (a 1% increase over 2002) in Virginia Beach have the following ranking within the state for production of the listed crops:

Rank Crop

1st Strawberries, Blueberries, Collards, Okra, Mustard Greens, Lima Beans

2nd Blackberries

4th Sweet Corn, Snap Beans

6th Cucumbers and Pickling Cucumbers

8th Cantaloupes

9th Soybeans (8 year average)

13th Wheat, Corn (8 year average)

For horses, Virginia Beach ranks 18th in number of horses, 7th in average value per horse, and 10th for total value of horses.

Based on local surveys, the actual number of horses in Virginia Beach is much higher than the number counted in the 2001 state survey. In recent years, a significant portion of farmland has been converted into 5 acre to 30-acre small “lifestyle” horse farms or ranchettes. These ranchettes are usually not recorded in agricultural statistical surveys so it appears that this farmland is lost to development each year. In reality much of this land has been converted to horse pastures. Horses exceed \$25 million in total value and contribute over \$10.8 million to the agricultural economy in the city.

Faced with massive losses in farmland and rapidly growing requirements for schools, police, fire protection, and other city services, city government enacted several programs to slow growth in the southern section of the city. The “Green Line” has given way to the “Transition Area”. The City has enacted several programs to maintain the viability of agriculture in the city. In addition to having a Department of Agriculture, the city is also a national leader in protecting farmland from development. Using dedicated city tax funds, the *Agricultural Reserve Program* purchases development rights from landowners at prevailing market rates. Over 9,000 acres of the 20,000-acre goal have been achieved to date in this program.

Although the Armed Forces has decreased from 7.3% in 2009 to 5.9% in 2011 Virginia Beach is still home to several military facilities, including the Navy’s East Coast master jet base, Naval Air Station Oceana. The Department of Defense spends \$14.853 billion annually in the Hampton Roads region. More than a quarter million active duty military, retirees, dependents, and civilian military employees reside in the Hampton Roads region.

Virginia Beach is one of the most popular tourist destinations on the East Coast, hosting more than 5 million overnight visitors annually. In fact, the City’s tourism accounts for 40.5% of the tourism business in Hampton Roads based upon hotel revenues. Over 14,000 people are employed in the tourist industry, with many of the jobs being low pay. The tourist industry is important to the economy, but it also strains the city’s road systems, especially important water crossings in the summer months Virginia Beach is home to 11 major retail corridors, and retail stores employ more than 15% of the City’s workers. Altogether, the City contains more than 14.2 million square feet of retail space. Retail development continues to be strong in the City.

Community and Resident Perspectives

The City of Virginia Beach seeks to attract and retain companies that use “green” business practices. Virginia Beach’s coastal location makes it well positioned to become a leader in offshore wind, solar energy and other newly developing industries in the field of alternative energy. The City of Virginia Beach continues to support the Small Business Development Center of Hampton Roads. It has hosted more than 1,500 participants in various business development training and entrepreneurial workshops held in conjunction with various Virginia state agencies. More than 30% of business in the City are women and minority-owned and that number continues to grow.

Virginia Beach City Public Schools system (VBCPS) is a high-quality school division widely acknowledged among the nation’s best. The City is composed of 56 elementary schools, 14 middle schools, 11 high schools and four secondary specialty centers. To help prepare students to be successful as workers and lifelong learners in this challenging and rapidly changing global economy, VBCPS offers expanded academic choices. These include seven school-within-a-school academies, three advanced academic programs, two gifted programs and several specific career-tract technical education programs.

There are strong Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) opportunities in Virginia Beach and the partnership between Schools and Economic Development continue to provide highly qualified workers for these industries. In order to compete in a fast-paced workplace, Virginia Beach continues to build a skilled workforce through lifelong learning and worker training. In school year 2011-2012, 2,173 students earned a Virginia Workplace Readiness Skills certification, which prepare students who successfully complete courses to enter the workforce upon graduation. In addition, 5,307 individuals earned industry credentials through career and technical education courses. These include students as well as adults who return to the classroom to seek certificates in everything from engineering to business and marketing.

Priority Issues

Virginia Beach Extension Agents and ELC members reviewed the City’s *Envision Virginia Beach 2040* report and administered a community survey to determine how Virginia Cooperative Extension could fit into the City’s overall strategy to reach its 2040 goal. Several priority issues rose to the top of the survey; however they were out of the scope of Virginia Cooperative Extension. Thus these issues are being addressed through the City of Virginia Beach Strategic Issue Teams. Most of the needs revealed in the community survey showed a correlation between trends that were reported in the City’s 2040 report. Thus, Virginia Cooperative Extension is playing a role in the overall strategy of the City of Virginia Beach to achieve its vision for the future. The report indicates that as the City prepares for 2040, four sociological factors will likely influence the nature of the City’s composition. The factors are demography, technological advancements, environmental sustainability, and the economic landscape.

Demographically, as Virginia Beach's population reshapes the community, most residents and workers will notice a progression toward the graying of their neighborhoods (the Silver Tsunami), a shift toward a larger minority presence, and a change of housing desirability standards. Led by Millennial generation research and development professionals, *technological advancements* will enable household and workplace efficiencies and productivity; they will facilitate highly complex and streamlined social, information, and workplace networks; and they will empower private enterprises to customize specific human health products, minimally invasive microbiological exploratory devices, and tourism augmented realities.

Environmentally, for many, their lifetime endeavor will be to develop a sustainable community, alleviate rising sea levels, mitigate coastal erosion, discover alternative fossil fuel energy options, and feed a growing local and global population.

Economically, federal, state, and local government activities have potential to shape the local marketplace. Military sustainability or growth uncertainty will be an ongoing contemporaneous challenge; moreover all government funding sources for core services and infrastructure will determine long-term transportation options, educational breadth, and social intervention

Issue 1: Water Quality and the Environment (conservation of natural resources)

There was high concern about the environment, and many of the comments were in regards to natural area preservation, landscape enhancement, and resource protection. On farms and urban land in Virginia Beach the issue of impaired waterways is more prevalent than ever before. In the tidally influenced areas of the City preservation of wetlands is also a high priority to keep our water bodies healthy and productive.

Status: VCE addresses water quality in regards to proper pesticide handling and gardening practices. Virginia Beach has over 250 Master Gardeners consisting of active volunteers, many senior citizens, trained to provide programming in these areas to citizens of all ages throughout the city. There is also a Master Gardener group receiving advanced training who specifically work with water stewardship.

Issue 2: Leadership

The Virginia Beach community will sustain itself if its residents have the supports needed to succeed.

Various methods have been identified to support the efforts of individuals and families to succeed professionally and socially. The Search Institute released a framework of 40 Developmental Assets, which identifies a set of skills, experiences, relationships, and behaviors that enable young people to develop into successful and contributing adults.

Status: The Developmental Assets® have been used in the City of Virginia Beach to bring about positive qualities that influence young people's development, helping them become caring, responsible, and productive adults.

4-H Programs are addressing this issue. 4-H is a community of young people across America who are learning leadership, citizenship, and life skills. Youth that are involved in the Virginia Beach 4-H program are learning leadership and life skills through their projects and club work. Also, youth that are camp counselors or campers learn these skills each summer at the Virginia Beach 4-H camp.

Issue 3: Life Skills/Decision

The Virginia Beach community has a strong lifelong learning environment and its citizens value education. In order to continue leading the region's economic vitality, continued emphasis is needed on the importance of post-secondary and non-traditional education to ensure that each citizen of Virginia Beach will reach his or her maximum potential. Education and learning are increasingly perceived as lifelong learning enterprises, rather than occurring only in one's youth. It is estimated that the average worker of today will have between 12 and 15 jobs over the course of a lifetime, which will require training and retraining in new skills and expertise. Additionally, people are not only returning to traditional classroom educational opportunities, but also relying on nontraditional venues for self-directed learning opportunities.

Status: This issue is being addressed through educational programs provided through both the Family and Consumer Sciences and 4-H Youth Development programs. They provide supportive environments that help children realize their individual potential. Adult leaders, mentors, and volunteers help children and youth adults build character and learn social skills.

Issue 4: Before and After School

One major component of Quality Education and Lifelong Learning is the school division. Its mission states: *The Virginia Beach City Public Schools, in partnership with the entire community, will empower every student to become a life-long learner who is a responsible, productive and engaged citizen within the global community (VBCPS Compass to 2015: A Strategic Plan for Student Success).*

The school division acknowledges that everyone has responsibility for empowering students to succeed in school and become productive citizens and lifelong learners.

Status: Although the school division recognized the need for everyone to be involved with the development of youth, Virginia Beach Schools are not receptive to having 4-H programs come into their schools. Most issues are addressed with the youth that are involved in club work.

Issue 5: Child Development

The education continuum begins before birth and continues throughout one's lifetime, from early childhood development through formal education and training to self-directed lifelong learning. Education directly impacts an individual's capacity to achieve self-reliance and secure employment and to contribute to society. Parents play a critical role as the first and most important teachers in their children's lives. Other caregivers and the community also have key roles in helping children establish the foundation for life-long learning and success.

Status: The City understands that we must nurture our young audiences and familiarize them at an early age. The city has over a decade of commitment and investment in early childhood education. In 2009, the original Ready to Learn structure was reorganized into the GrowSmart office to combine health and school readiness under one strategic focus. Virginia Cooperative Extension played a role in the planning stages. A positive indicator of the effectiveness of this investment is the decrease from 21.2% in 2003 to 11.9% in 2009-10 in the percentage of Virginia Beach kindergartners needing additional instruction in pre-reading skills.

Issue 6: Youth Activities

The City of Virginia Beach believes that young people should have a voice in the community. Strong communities have involved citizens that are willing to invest time and resources to improve the lives of its young citizens.

Status: 4-H has a plethora of youth activities from club meetings, all the way to National 4-H Congress in Atlanta, Georgia. To better reach these youth in Virginia Beach, another 4-H Agent would be needed. According to Wave 8 of the study, 4-H'ers – regardless of their background, socio-economic status, race, and gender – thrive through the health/safety education and experiences they receive through 4-H programming. In fact, young people in 4-H are:

- 3.4 times more likely to delay sexual intercourse by Grade 12
- Shown to have had significantly lower drug, alcohol and cigarette use than their peers
- 2.3 times more likely to exercise and be physically active

The advantages of 4-H participation also include higher educational achievement and higher motivation for future education. Young people in 4-H:

academic competence, and an elevated level of engagement at school,

- Are nearly two times more likely to plan to go to college,
- Are more likely to pursue future courses or a career in science, engineering, or computer technology.
- The study also finds that girls in 4-H are 2 times more likely to pursue science careers over their peers.
- A notable trend of the study indicates that 11th grade 4-H youth are 3.3 times more likely to actively contribute to their communities when compared with youth who do not participate in 4-H.

Extension supports youth education and activities through in-school horticulture training, school tours of agriculture research facilities, and horticulture summer youth camps sponsored by Master Gardeners. These educational activities reinforce SOL-based science concepts and allow students to be environmental stewards of their community.

Issue 7a (tie): Nutrition

Since June 2007, households receiving Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits have increased from 7,095 to 15,345 households representing 35,327 citizens benefiting from this program. The increase of 8,250 additional households receiving SNAP benefits since 2007 represents an increase of 116%. The number of citizens receiving medical insurance through Medicaid and Family Access to Medical Insurance Security (FAMIS) has

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also increased but not as significantly as the increases in SNAP benefits. In 2007, approximately 28,000 citizens were dependent on FAMIS or Medicaid and as of June 2011 the number rose to approximately 34,257 representing an increase of 22%.

Status: This issue is being addressed through several educational programs conducted by Food and Nutrition Program Assistants and the Family and Consumer Sciences Extension Agent.

Issue 7b (tie): Youth Violence

It has been revealed that not every child in the City has a nurturing environment in which grow and develop into healthy adults. Effective strategies on violence prevention, such as conflict resolution, and peace building activities need to be in place to ensure children to grow up to be responsible adults.

Status: For nearly a decade, preeminent youth development scholar, Dr. Richard Lerner, and the team at the Institute for Applied Research in Youth Development at Tufts University have been working with faculty at land-grant universities to conduct the 4-H Study of Positive Youth Development. The 4-H Study of Positive Youth Development is a longitudinal study that began in 2002, and continues today, surveying more than 7,000 adolescents from diverse backgrounds across 44 U.S. states. The study is made possible by the contributions of our nation's land-grant universities and National 4-H Council. This in-depth study has discovered that, when compared to other youth, young people involved in 4-H: (1) Have higher educational achievement and motivation for future education, and (2) Are more civically active and make more civic contributions to their communities.

Issue 8: Finances/Financial Management

After many years of prosperity, we now find ourselves in an uncertain and volatile economic environment. The most staggering blow to both the national and local economy has been the collapse of the housing market and the rising cost of city services. The increased number of eviction notices in some of our poorer neighborhoods has a direct correlation to the need for financial education. The City's Housing and Neighborhood Preservation hotline receives an average of 1,000 calls per month for emergency housing assistance. Individuals need to become knowledgeable about financial issues and how those issues affect all aspects of their lives including physical and mental. Individuals also need to learn how to safeguard their personal information to reduce the possibilities of Identity Theft.

Status: October 2010, the Mayor and City Council endorsed the National League of Cities Mayors' Action Challenge for Children and Families. The City has established two financial literacy programs for residents living in the city (*Bank On Virginia Beach and Five Hundred Financially Fit Families For the Future*). Virginia Cooperative Extension has been a part in every developmental phase of these two programs and still plays a major role in the delivery of the programs. In addition VCE Family and Consumer Sciences Agent conduct financial management programs throughout the City for diverse audiences.

Issue 9: Food Safety

Having a safe food supply is as important as having an abundant food supply, although the proposed Food Safety and Modernization Act takes this to a degree that is hard to justify on a direct to consumer farming operation. Once enacted the Food Safety and Modernization Act may just take the direct marketing small family farm out of business. Each operation will have their unique hurdles to overcome in order to become compliant and keep up with food safety on the farm level.

Status: The issue needs to be explored once the comment period has ended and the final rules have been enacted, but at that point the Virginia Beach VCE will explore every avenue to address this issue and it is likely that additional resources will be needed to address this issue.

Issue 10: Agriculture Preservation

Without farms there are no farmers. Virginia Beach is ahead of most localities in this issue and has done many things to ensure that Agriculture will be preserved and Virginia Beach VCE has assisted with this at every step of the way. The reality is that Virginia Beach has continued to lose farmland, but through the years Virginia Beach VCE has successfully helped farmers make transitions to more profitable operations even in the face of this decline in available farmland.

Status: This issue is currently being addressed through VCE Agriculture program, and will continue to address this issue as vigorously as it has in the past.